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SUBJECT: MEETING WITH DADIS DISAPPOINTS CIVIL SOCIETY

REF: CONAKRY 0096

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. During a nationally broadcast meeting with civil and political leaders, CNDD President Dadis was aggressive, vague, and noncommittal. Despite the CNDD's February 7 announcement that elections will take place in late 2009, Dadis danced around the subject and refused to be pinned down on a date and the duration of the transition. Dadis publicly lauded certain political leaders and disparaged others. Using appeals for patriotism and respect for security, he attempted to justify some of his more controversial decisions. Contacts reported mixed reactions, but most agreed that the meeting was not what they were hoping for. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) Following the critical declarations issued by Guinean civil society and political parties last week (reftel), Moussa Dadis Camara, President of the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD), met with a wide range of civil and political actors on February 9 at the People's Palace. Hadja Sera Rabiataou, co-leader of the Unions Intersyndicale, spoke on behalf of the population, essentially reiterating the demands civil society defined last week. Dadis spoke at length and was described by some observers as aggressive and rude, while monopolizing the microphone.

A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE

¶3. (U) Dadis claimed that the CNDD's seizure of power was legitimate not only because of obvious popular support, but also because of the willingness of civil society leaders to work with the CNDD to navigate the political transition. He reiterated the CNDD's commitment to organize elections and restore civilian rule, but was vague when it came to election dates and a concrete timeline for the transition.

DEMONSTRATING POLITICAL BIAS

¶4. (U) Dadis doled out high praise to some opposition political leaders, including Alpha Conde (Rally for the Guinean People - RPG) and Jean Marie Dore (Guinean Union for Progress - UPG), while disparaging anyone who had anything to do with the Conte regime. Dadis stated that he would not turn power over to any corrupt officials, including anyone who had associated with the Conte regime. Dadis complimented Alpha Conde and Jean Marie Dore for their integrity as characterized by their refusal to participate in the past government.

SIX MONTHS, TWELVE MONTHS...IT'S UP TO YOU

15. (SBU) After Rabiatou finished speaking, Dadis reportedly seized a copy of the declaration and started commenting on each point, without consulting the CNDD. On the question of an election date, Dadis said "six months, twelve months...it is not up to us to set the electoral calendar, this is a job for the people of Guinea." He invited the audience to submit proposals, which he promised to review. (COMMENT. Only a few days earlier, the CNDD had announced that elections would take place in the last quarter of 2009. Dadis made no such reference. END COMMENT). Civil society participants told Pol LES that Dadis was equally cagey on the question of the duration of the transition period, providing no indication of whether or not he was willing to cede power within the year. Civil society demanded that the transition be completed no later than December 2009.

DEMOCRACY, NOT ANARCHY

16. (U) Civil society also demanded that the CNDD remove the many military roadblocks that the CNDD has erected throughout the capital and the interior. Dadis claimed that these roadblocks are necessary tools for enforcing the government's commitment to fight drug trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, and armed robbery. "There is no development without security. There is no democracy without security. There will be no elections without security," he said.

17. (U) On the question of lifting the CNDD's ban on
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political and labor activity, Dadis again provided no real response, saying only that he believed in liberty and democracy, but also in order, not anarchy.

HUMAN RIGHTS

18. (SBU) Rabiatou raised the issue of investigating the human rights abuses of 2006 and 2007. According to participants, Dadis said civil society was welcome to conduct any investigations that they want, and that the CNDD would not block their efforts. Political leader Mouctar Diallo commented that Dadis was clearly uneasy with the question, and that his tone and facial expression revealed his distaste for the subject.

19. (SBU) At one point, Dadis reportedly reiterated his decision to immediately impose the death penalty for anyone involved in narco-trafficking, child trafficking, armed robbery, and money laundering. All of a sudden, he interrupted himself saying "I see that the German Ambassador is watching me intently as I talk about the death penalty...you know the Managing Director of BICIGUI (French) was attacked last week, which could have affected Guinea's relationship with France and eventually discourage investors...that is why I am advocating for this punishment...it is for your own safety." (COMMENT. While able to confirm the attack on the BICIGUI Director, Embassy is unaware of any other Western diplomats attending the meeting. END COMMENT).

REACTIONS

110. (SBU) Observers interpreted Dadis' repeated slights of former government officials as applying specifically to opposition leaders Sidya Toure (Union of Republican Forces - UFR) and Cellou Diallo (Union of Guinean Forces for Democracy - UFDG). Sidya told Pol LES on February 10 that he had mixed feelings about the speech in general, but that he personally

was not worried. He said that the ongoing audits would reveal nothing because he had done nothing wrong during his tenure as prime minister. Mouctar Diallo, president of a relatively new youth party, told Pol LES that he found Dadis' comments on political leaders disturbing. "He should not be expressing his personal preference...the justice system should decide who is corrupt and ineligible to run for election...Dadis is taking sides."

¶11. (SBU) Political leader Ousmane Bah's (Union for Progress and Renewal - UPR) impression of the meeting was generally negative. He told Pol LES that Dadis spent a lot of time talking, but not really saying anything. "He was just repeating previous speeches," Bah said, adding that Dadis avoided specifics on elections and the transition itself. Jean-Marie Dore (UPG) was more positive, saying that Dadis' insistence that the population determine an election timeline reflects Dadis' interest in ensuring that political parties are involved in the transition process. According to Dore, Dadis is beginning to react more seriously to internal and international pressure, but that he should be watched closely.

COMMENT

¶12. (SBU) Many contacts said that they were hoping to have a frank discussion about the political transition, with clear progress toward an election date and a defined transition timeline. Most were disappointed. Despite the CNDD having announced that elections will take place by the end of 2009, Dadis' statements suggest that he may not be on board with that plan. He was quick to justify his recent decisions and behavior with calls for patriotism and the need for national security. Dadis' singling out of specific political leaders suggests that he may be becoming more politicized. Civil and political leaders planned to regroup in order to determine how best to react to Monday's meeting. END COMMENT.

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